



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

January 28, 2010 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River, Town Hall

Agenda

Present: Joan Hughson, Greg Ottway, John Ross, Lorraine Nicol, Terrence Lazarus, Will Lindeman, Marc Dubord, Ken Brown, Ken Miller, Terry Michaelis (for Tess Larson), Sandi Riemersma, Gayna Welsh
Guests: Kathleen Murphy, Jen Nitschelm, Rob Harrison

1. Welcome and Introductions

Ken opened the meeting at 1:37 p.m.

2. Minutes from last meeting

Ken reviewed the November 26, 2009 Minutes for the Board. Under point 10.c: Sandi discussed with, rather than send a letter to, the County of Warner about our support for their day use area at Weir Bridge.

Motion: Joan/John moved adoption of Minutes as circulated.

3. Vacancies on MRWCC Board Update –First Nations

A letter was sent to Piikaani and Stoney Nations from Kim Shade and signed by Bev Yee. No response as of yet. Kim suggested a follow up email which Sandi has done. For federal government representation, we will ask for potential candidates to be decided at AGM. The vacant water users seat will be filled at the AGM as well.

4. Alberta Environment Contract Applications – due February 1, 2010

The core grant application that was submitted has been approved for two years. MRWCC will still have ability to apply for projects separately. Sandi is working on these submissions and has defined 6 different projects with all teams plus one that is Board led. IFN Study follow up, particularly for modeling, will be submitted (in support of the IWMP). We are seeking to continue Water Monitoring Program and are asking for funding for this. Streambank Stabilization Demo Project implementation is another project we are looking to complete (municipalities are heavily supporting this project with in-kind hours and materials). A new project that Sandi has determined warrants submission is for a Strategic Fund Development Plan: MRWCC would hire a professional to help plan a funding strategy. Riparian Monitoring Program is another project we would like to revisit; it would entail hiring Cows and Fish to address sites over a three year span. A sixth project is a comprehensive Water Conservation Strategy (survey, rain barrel and xeriscaping demo plots). The priority is to complete the IWMP. Ken wondered about prioritizing projects in light of the current climate with regards to government funding and Sandi explained that we are required to rank the projects within the application.

5. Team Updates

- a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team: Report Attached

- i. School poster contest: Posters are on display at the Town Hall, ATB donated \$300 for the first place prizes, LJB Fuels also gave soft sided coolers to go with the tents for first place, Multi-Sar is donating books to go with our MRWCC t-shirts for second place prizes. Winners will be presented with their prizes at the AGM.
- ii. Agrium Caring for Our Watershed Contest: We were asked to help deliver the Caring for our Watershed Contest that Agrium is sponsoring and Gayna has presented the contest to both Milk River and Coutts schools, is scheduled to go to Foremost January 29. Sandi will be making a presentation to the students on February 22 at Coutts and Milk River to help jumpstart them with their entries.
- iii. Geocache: With the assistance of Jeff Austin, we will be setting up 4 sites within the watershed on geocache.com for seekers to discover and learn about the watershed, especially some of the hidden corners of it. We have done a test one and are waiting for Jeff to verify it for us before we post it.
- iv. Xeriscape Workshop: will run on February 20 with Steve MacRae as the instructor of the workshop. Participants will bring designs for their yards and Steve will help them with them and judge the best designed yard. The prize for the best designed yard was donated by Ducks Unlimited.
- v. Annual General Meeting
 1. Agenda – Sandi asked the group if we would like a speaker who would address the Land Use Framework, especially in view of the IWMP moving ahead. Link Byfield (a name that CAIT had suggested as a guest speaker) gave Sandi an alternate name for a guest speaker that she will follow up on; Norman Ward, a rancher from Porcupine Hills, former head of Alberta Beef Producers. Other suggestions: Land Use Framework secretariat Morris Seiferling, the MLA from Willow Creek Evan Berger who has done a lot of work on the Land Use Framework.

Action: Sandi will follow up and attempt to secure a speaker that will give a balanced overview of the Land Use Framework. Try for Evan Berger first and then Norm Ward as a back up.

2. Board Positions up for Elections - Sandi went through the attached chart. Warren Cunningham, Don Watson (Non Government Organization) positions are up, Ken Miller (Agriculture Farmer), John Ross (Agriculture Rancher), Forty Mile County, Provincial positions that Greg and Terrance hold (names put forth by these departments), First Nations vacant and John Byrne (Health) and Water Users position (Will Lindeman is intending to let his name stand).

b. Research, Monitoring and Project Team

i. Streambank Restoration Project

1. AMEC Contract – this company was hired to develop conceptual designs for the Streambank Stabilization Project. They have viewed Weir Bridge, which the County of Warner is very interested in as they want to make a day use area there. AMEC also viewed Gold Springs Park and Hilmer Bridge sites (Cardston County). Within the next couple of weeks, the Board should have photos from AMEC outlining the problems at each site. The intent is to demonstrate different techniques that other municipalities can adopt.
2. U of S Engineering Students – contacted Sandi looking for a third year project in streambank stabilization. They have selected a site at WOS Park by the rodeo grounds and will do a similar project as AMEC (smaller scale). It is a team of 3 or 4. Warren Helgeson is their advisor; Sandi is their “industry” representative.

- ii. Water Quality Monitoring Program – will continue to implement, have a potential grant to apply for assistance.
 - iii. Instream Flow Needs Study – Golder Associates is conducting this and are currently limited by winter data. They are going to reduce the work they originally proposed and carry out additional field work to conduct future winter modeling work. The MRWCC will need to find an additional \$30,000.00 from AENV or JIT to complete the annual IFN. Risk if we don't get the extra funding to collect this data is that we will need to repeat the summer modeling exercise.
 - c. Water Supply and Management Team
 - i. Joint International Team – Ken reports that things are moving ahead and the Team has reached a milestone. They have narrowed potential options down to about 3 that are being considered carefully. Speaker today, Rob Harrison, will update on JIT.
 - d. Integrated Watershed Management Plan Team
 - i. Draft Terms of Reference – Motion to release to public. The Draft TOR is ready to be released to the public. The Team is aiming for early March. Lorraine asked how the draft TOR will be released to public and circulated. Ken informed the board that the draft TOR will be on the Council's website and a public open house type meeting is scheduled for March 4 at the Milk River Heritage Hall. Input from the public can be received online, at the open house or by calling Sandi. Once all of the feedback is incorporated, the Team will seek approval from the municipalities involved and then the Terms of Reference will be released at the AGM in April.

Motion: Ken asked for approval by consensus to release the draft TOR to the public. Second by: Carried.
6. Financial Report - presented
 7. Important Dates
 - a. March 4, 2010 – Heritage Hall, IWMP Team presentation of draft Terms of Reference: from 4:00 to 6:00 pm.
 - b. April 8, 2010 - MRWCC 5th Annual General Meeting. Sandi asked for any special ideas to commemorate our 5th AGM.
 8. Next meeting – Lethbridge, February 25, 2009 – 1:30 pm start
 9. Adjourn – Ken B moved to adjourn at 2:45 p.m. The Board welcomed Robert Harrison and his presentation on the Joint Initiatives Team.



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

March 25, 2010 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Agenda

Present: Tom Gilchrist, John Byrne, Warren Cunningham, Will Lindeman, Greg Ottway, Ross Ford, Sandi Riemersma, Gayna Welsh, Lorraine Nicol, Ken Miller, Wade Goen (Chinook Health)

1. Welcome

Tom opened the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

2. Minutes from last meeting

Sandi highlighted the minutes from January 28, 2010.

Motion: Ross/Greg moved to adopt minutes as circulated. Carried

3. South Saskatchewan Regional Plan Update:

March 31st is the last date that people have to give input or concerns to the RAC. SEAWA has proposed to remove term "legislative authority" from the discussion paper that outlines the WPAC role within the Land Use Framework. Rather, recommendations made within Integrated Watershed Management Plans (IWMPs) would be strictly advisory. It is felt that it may be premature to recommend legislative authority to WPAC's, but the discussion is one that needs to be had with all WPAC's and the Alberta Water Council. Sandi will send the response to Bob Phillips at SEAWA.

Motion: Ken/Ross moved that we agree with the proposed revision to remove the the term legislative authority and to make it a recommendation for RACs to recognize the role of the IWMP within the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan. Further clarification will be circulated by Sandi. Carried

4. Annual General Meeting

- i. Agenda/Board Elections: Sandi reviewed the agenda, highlighting all the excellent speakers and topics to be covered. A discussion was held on membership and renewal. We need to have an indication from people attending our AGM whether they want to be a member of MRWCC. Sandi will create a form for people to sign at the door indicating whether they are a member or participant. Sandi has an idea for a person to sit on board to occupy the federal seat (Greg MacCulloch out of Calgary, a hydrogeologist who appears interested in MiRTAP).
- ii. Set Up: We need to set up the night before if anyone can help. A special session on the Milk River Transboundary Aquifer Project (MiRTAP) is scheduled for the morning of April 8th with Montana counterparts attending. There is a block of 10 rooms set up at Comfort Inn in Lethbridge for out of town guests. Lorraine offered to drive Dr. Schreier and Dr. Rivera from Lethbridge to Milk River in the morning. Promotion in Lethbridge: Lorraine will put up some posters around U of

L, John B. suggested Public Library, too. The poster has run in the Milk River Breeze for the past two weeks.

- iii. Pre-AGM Meeting/ Silent auction items: There are some excellent items coming in for the silent auction.

Action: Lorraine N. to pick up Dr. Schreier and Dr. Rivera and drive them to the morning session and AGM on April 8, 2010.

Action: Lorraine N. to post AGM material at the U of L.

5. Review MRWCC Board of Director Positions

a. What do you like about the MRWCC Board meetings? How can we improve?

- Directors would like more information from team meetings brought to board meetings.
- Guest speakers are welcome at Board meetings and the number this past year was about right.
- Alternating between Lethbridge and Milk River is good.
- The way that the work is brought together into Water For Life or Land Use Framework is critical and essential.
- New Board Members would benefit from a briefing or orientation to Board.
- Representation on Board is balanced.
- Strengthen contact with what is going on at the Provincial level.
- Would be excellent if we filled all seats on Board (i.e. First Nations, Federal seat),
- Sandi asked about a Board retreat, response was that the annual field trips are as good as retreats (i.e. to Havre).
- Good to work with the American side of watershed and learn their perspective and concerns.
- If there are ever any concerns, please let Sandi know.

b. What topics would we like to see covered and how do Board members share information?

Sandi asked what would be a good destination for a field trip this year and suggested canal at Sherburne, lunch at Mini Glaciers and plan for later in the year to try to assure dry weather and conditions. Lorraine suggested the new Water building at the U of L as a good trip, could fit in with a regular board meeting such as May's.

Action: Lorraine will look into organizing about an hour's tour for late morning or noon of the board meeting on May 27th (start time 1:30 p.m.) which we will try to have at a board room at the University.

6. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team

- i. School poster contest and Agrium Caring for Our Watershed Contest: The winners of the poster contest have been notified and invited to the AGM where our sponsors and a Council member will present their prizes. All posters will be on display that day. We have the entire grade eight class participating in the Agrium Caring for our Watershed Contest.
- ii. Xeriscape with Village of Coutts: We have applied for a grant to further the site in Coutts, but in the name of the Village of Coutts. Steve MacRae will visit the site on March 26 and Lori and Gayna are meeting with him about the site.
- iii. Geocache: Our first site will soon be posted. We had Jeff Austin verify and subsequently correct our initial coordinates (errors are due to varying satellite readings on any given day). Sandi went over other potential sites; Kennedy

Coulee, Siphons in Montana, Gauging station at North Fork. Greg cautioned to be careful where the site is located at Kennedy Coulee as it is a Protected Area.

b. Research, Monitoring and Project Team

- i. Streambank Restoration Project: AMEC Contract/U of S Students: AMEC has been contracted to undertake the study to help the R&M team determine the best site for streambank reclamation project. The team used cost, public vs. private site, other government department jurisdiction/responsibility, rate of erosion (urgency), and strength of partnership at each site: conclusion was to focus on Hilmer Bridge and engage Alberta Transportation to partner with County of Warner on Weir Bridge site. The AMEC contract included an engineered design of the site chosen. AMEC will be going out next week to survey Hilmer Bridge for the engineered design.
- ii. Water Quality Monitoring Program: We don't have funds for this, AENV is still pursuing it (Wendell Koning), looking at modifying parameters of each sample but expanding area of monitoring (east part of watershed) with the help of Bob Kaufman. The background data from the monitoring project is essential to develop thresholds within the IWMP. Sandi gave information on total phosphorous, Tom suggested separating data according to flow, Ken suggested natural versus augmented flow, Ross brought up periods of high rainfall may influence analysis. A factsheet will be created to be distributed to municipalities for their use. AENV has developed water quality objectives within SSRP and did not use the data collected by MRWCC due to short-term nature of the data set. A lot of the objectives have consequently been left as data deficient; this is perhaps an area where we can fill the gaps.
- iii. Instream Flow Needs Study: Golder Associates were hired, and the R&M Team reviewed the draft report which did not identify flows, just the tools that we could use to identify the flows. Negotiations resulted with Golder to provide more recommendations. Golder did not want to recommend flow because they thought the recommendations would be final but MRWCC needs flow regimes recommended for a healthy environment. We are starting with zero information and need a beginning benchmark to work from. We needed indication of flows from Golder. The revised product is to be to Sandi by March 26, 2010.
- iv. MiRTAP: Milk River Transboundary Aquifer Project: The project is to map the Milk River Aquifer on both sides of the border (Dr. Alfonso Rivera from Quebec classifies the Milk River as a priority for mapping that can be used as an example internationally). The second part to this project is a well abandonment study, follow up to build on original well abandonment program.
- v. Below Your Watershed – Groundwater Conference: Sandi attended, sponsored by SEAWA. Sandi presented with Alfonso on MiRTAP and they were received very well.

c. Water Supply and Management Team

- i. Joint Initiative Team: Ken M. reported that the Team is in the final stages of two combinations of options. They are close in amount of water affected. The Team is close to making a recommendation – the final report is due in June. On April 13, 2010 the Alberta part of the JIT will meet with Minister Rob Renner and Broyce Jacobs to update them on progress and the likely outcomes of the Team's work. Tom and Ken will have an opportunity to state discrepancy in attention St. Mary's receives versus Milk River irrigators. Development of a Joint Board with Montana and Alberta that can continue the work of the JIT and

implement recommendations is proposed. Robert Harrison approached Sandi about information regarding this, members of JIT asked for input as well.

- d. Integrated Watershed Management Plan Team
 - i. Draft Terms of Reference and Public Open House Update (held March 4, 2010): The draft TOR for the IWMP and feedback form are online. About 20 people attended the Open House on March 4th. Have had some feedback returned but would like more so likely will extend deadline for comments. Sandi will compile all comments for AGM, incorporate feedback and ask for approval at AGM by members. Once that is achieved, the Team will take the TOR to municipalities for approval. It is important to keep all stakeholders updated throughout the process and get them on board before final product is published.

7. Financial Report: The audit is nearly complete.

We have received funds from AENV for the upcoming two funding years (i.e., 2010 to 2012).

Motion: Ross/Lorraine moved that we put 2011/12 (\$182,000) into a separate investment tool for that year. Carried

8. Important Dates

- a. April 8, 2010 - MRWCC 5th Annual General Meeting
- b. April 22, 2010 – OWC Annual General Meeting, at Coast Hotel, starts at 10:00 a.m. and goes to evening.
- c. June 12, 2010 – Canoe Trip, Sandi and Ken discussing route, north fork or Poverty Rock? Warren and Will said that the north fork is very interesting. Likely stay with the north fork. Lois and Mary will likely cater the lunch if there is a spot for them to deliver to.

9. Next meeting – May 27th at the University of Lethbridge Water Building, Lethbridge. Lorraine N. will arrange a tour for the Board prior to the meeting. Lunch will be provided following the tour.

10. Adjournment – Ross moved adjournment at 4:15 p.m.



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

May 27, 2010 – 12:00 PM

University of Lethbridge
Water and Environmental Sciences Building
RM WE2070 (2nd Floor, NE)

Present: Tom Gilchrist, John Ross, Lorraine Nicol, Ross Ford, Ed Sloboda, Will Lindeman, Ken Miller, Sandi Riemersma, Warren Cunningham, Gayna Welsh, Terrence Lazarus

1. Tour of Water and Environmental Sciences Building, U of L – 12:00 to 1:00 pm;
Thanks to Lorraine for arranging this tour.
2. Lunch (1:00 to 2:00 : Pizza)
3. Welcome and Introductions for new Board Members

Tom opened meeting at 2:00 p.m. Everyone introduced themselves and Tom welcomed all, particularly the new members.

4. Minutes from last meeting

Motion: Ross/Will moved adoption of the minutes of March 25th meeting. Carried

5. Elect Executive (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) and assign Team Leads

Sandi chaired the meeting while executive elections were held.

Position of Chair:

Motion: John/Ed nominated Tom to position of President. Sandi called three times for further nominations, none were received.

Motion: Warren/Ross moved nominations cease. Carried. Tom Gilchrist accepted position of Chair for another term.

Position of Vice – Chair:

Motion: Ross/Lorraine nominated Ken Miller to this position. Sandi called three times for further nominations, none were received.

Motion: John/Tom moved nominations cease. Carried. Ken Miller accepted the position of Vice-Chair for another term.

Position of Treasurer:

Motion: Warren/John nominated Will Lindeman to position of treasurer. Sandi called three times for further nominations, none were received.

Motion: Ross/Ken moved nominations cease. Carried. Will accepted the position of Treasurer for a term.

Position of Secretary:

Motion: Will/John nominated Warren to position of secretary. Sandi called three times for further nominations, none were received.

Motion: Ross/Tom moved nominations cease. Carried. Warren Cunningham accepted the position of Secretary for another term.

Tom resumed the position of Chair for discussion on Team Leads. IWMP lead has been Ken Miller and he would like to continue for another year; R&M Team lead has been John Ross and he agreed to stay as such; WSM Team lead has been Tom and he accepted the responsibility for another year. The leadership of CAIT was discussed and it was felt that another Board member should take that responsibility. Ed Sloboda volunteered to be the CAIT leader. It was pointed out that all the Teams do integrate and overlap each other. Tom brought up MiRTAP and Sandi reported that funding is not yet in place but the project will be realized. Will Lindeman, Lorraine Nicol, Ed Sloboda and John Ross volunteered to be on this committee when it is needed.

6. Review Annual General Meeting

Ed commented that we provided timely and interesting information. Terrence felt that the guest speakers were very good and the interest was high among AENV people. Entertainment: the music could be playing during supper or we could have music at 5:00 after the formal meeting and before supper. Lorraine also commented that the speakers were of high quality. Ann Yates was appreciated for her perspective on the U.S. side of the management of the Milk River. Terrence commented that it provided a good opportunity for networking with American counterparts. Having the poster contest winners attend was a benefit, bringing in more citizens of the watershed.

7. AENV Contract Discussion

Sandi highlighted that the AENV contract was awarded to the MRWCC, but only for the work required to complete the Integrated Watershed Management Plan. No funding was provided for water monitoring, riparian monitoring, fund development or the streambank stabilization demonstration project. The total value of the contract is \$ 125,600.00.

8. Authorization of contracts

Palliser Environmental contract reviewed, on file.

Motion: Ken/Warren moved to accept the contract. Carried
Contract for Gayna Welsh reviewed, on file.

Motion: Ken/Lorraine moved to accept the contract. Carried.

9. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team

- i. Agrium Caring for Our Watershed Contest: As a community partner this was an excellent experience. It allowed us to go into the schools again; Sandi gave a presentation on the watershed which was used by any students that created a project. There is a follow up meeting scheduled in Lethbridge on June 21st for all community partners and Lindsey Metheral, program coordinator. Implementation money will be determined at this meeting.

Action: Letters of thanks to Agrium and of commendation to Kelsey MacMillan for her support and ingenuity will be sent out.

- ii. Xeriscape with Village of Coutts: The professional plans that were drawn up by Steve MacRae from Prairie Xeriscape Designs are finalized; Lori Rolfe at the Village office has them. She has given copies to the landscapers. We have been successful in securing \$5000 from the RBC Blue Water Community Grant for the demonstration site and the Village will be using Badlands money for the other site. Once the grant money is in, we will be planning signs to explain xeriscaping and the benefits it has for the environment, in particular the water supply.
- iii. Annual Canoe Trip: Currently registrations sit at 46 people. The itinerary will be emailed once final and posted to the website. Ken is going on a scouting trip next week to determine the best lunch spot and the most efficient way to park people's vehicles. The route this year is from the Remington buildings on Highway 501 and range road 231 to the campsite north of Del Bonita just to the west of Highway 62. Ken estimates it will be a 6 hour float.
- iv. Geocache: We have our write ups ready and we are waiting for Jeff Austin to help post the first one and to help locate the other three. Ed Sloboda volunteered to help out in any way as he is very familiar with geocaching.
- v. Water Conservation Survey: The initial draft is complete and the proposal is to implement in late June, door to door, in Coutts and Milk River.
- vi. Cuppers Project: Cuppers will try to meet our challenge for supplying the Canoe trip and PCF conference with T0K 1M0 blend (a blend created by Andrew and Roxie Smith, Milk River Watershed Council members) using our photo on the label. For every pound sold with our picture on it, we receive a \$1 donation from Cuppers.
- vii. Yellow Fish Road: this program has now been implemented in both Coutts and Milk River; all supplies have been returned to the City of Lethbridge. As soon as there is a write up featuring the Coutts students, a final report will go into Trout Unlimited.

b. Research, Monitoring and Project Team

i. Streambank Restoration Project Update

Conceptual designs are done for three sites and Hilmer Bridge was selected for a demonstration site. The engineering design is complete. We need to get approval from Fisheries & Oceans, AENV and SRD. The goal is implementation before the end of March 2010, prior to the start up of the St. Mary diversion. Cardston County will provide equipment, manpower and about 5 people to harvest vegetation for the site; we need to come up with about \$40,000. Sandi has applied to RBC Blue Water Leadership Grant.

ii. Water Quality Monitoring Program Initiated

This is the fifth year of operation; samples will be taken twice a month April through June and once a month July through October.

iii. Instream Flow Needs Study – Next Steps

IFN Study is now complete at a total cost \$196,000. The Golder report includes preliminary figures on some instream flow needs. Sandi is in contact with SRD about developing a workshop to develop habitat suitability criteria curves for eight selected fish species in the Milk River. We now have the tools to continue but need resources to move forward. Within the IWMP contract funding there is about \$35,000 to finish the winter model with Golder. We are seeking support from either an ASRD modeler or AENV modeler to complete the simulations before we can address Water Conservation Objectives.

iv. MiRTAP: Milk River Transboundary Aquifer Project – Next Steps

c. Water Supply and Management Team

i. Joint Initiative Team

Tom visited with three provincial Ministers about supply along the Milk River; he acknowledged that there are no funds for large projects but stressed the need for planning so that when funds do become available, a plan is in place to be implemented. The Alberta group of JIT will be looking at teaming up with Southgrow to raise awareness and increase strength of position.

Ken reported that the JIT is waiting for modelers to complete the information package and their final analysis. The Montana side has some new members that are getting on board and becoming familiar with the Team's work. The team is aiming for summer completion of the project. The Team is at a critical point right now.

d. Integrated Watershed Management Plan Team

i. Next steps

Things are progressing smoothly. Kathleen Murphy will be replaced by Doug Ohrn from the Calgary office. Four counties and two towns need to be approached for approval of Terms of Reference.

Motion: Ken/Ross moved that the Board move status of TOR to final from draft. Carried.

10. Financial Report:

Motion: Warren/Ross moved to adopt financial report as presented. Carried.

11. Important Dates

- a. June 12, 2010 – Annual Canoe Trip
- b. October 19 – 21, 2010 – WPAC Summit in Medicine Hat

12. Next meeting date – June 24, 2010, Milk River (tentative tour to headwaters in Montana; also tentative cancellation of meeting due to meeting in Nisku on June 22, 2010 organized by AENV)

13. Adjournment: Ross moved adjournment at 4:20 pm.



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

September 23, 2010 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: Greg Ottway, Warren Cunningham, Will Lindeman, John Byrne, Ken Miller, Joan Hughson, Tess Larson, Ed Sloboda, Tom Gilchrist, Sandi Riemersma, John Ross, Mary Lupwayi, Lorraine Nicol, Terrence Lazarus

Guest: Doug Ohrn, Alberta Environment

Agenda

1. Welcome back!

Tom welcomed everyone back

2. Introductions – New MRWCC Program Coordinator – Welcome to Mary Lupwayi
3. Minutes from last meeting (May 27, 2010)

Motion: John Ross moves to adopt the Minutes, Tess Larson second. Carried.

4. Review Approved Water Management Plan component of Integrated Watershed Management Plan – Doug Ohrn, AENV and IWMP Team member

Motion: Ken Miller moves that the draft Approved Water Management Plan be approved for release to stakeholders, provided that revisions as discussed by the IWMP Team are made and the Team supports the final product. Greg Ottway second. Carried.

5. Review Partnership Protocol and determine course of action – must respond by September 30, 2010
 - a. support the MOU
 - b. data ownership
 - c. delegated to a junior partners – when bringing communities to table, lots of value from WPACs not acknowledged; partners are cooperating
 - d. involve the other GOA departments in the Partnership

Action: Sandi to draft letter and circulate to Board members. Lorraine offered to review letter and offer some words.

6. Future role of the Milk River WPAC – Discussion on WPAC Summit PreConference Questions
 1. a) What is your WPAC's current expertise, interest (focus) (e.g., monitoring, education, research) and the main purpose of your organization?
 - Respond to watershed issues by undertaking research that will address social, economic and environmental aspects

- Science and social aspects are contained in the SOW and the IWMP – the future will be based on the iterative monitoring and evaluation
- Monitoring is important aspect of our work – applies involvement – it is the basis of action
- Community involvement and education – public awareness

b) Who are your main stakeholders? Who drives your purpose (e.g., membership driven, municipalities, industry)?

- Community driven – community has taken responsibility for watershed and its management

c) Recognizing the two mandates from government, SOWs and IWMPs, does your WPAC have other services to offer?

- Implement the recommendations of the JIT.
- Assist with future operations of joint Councils.
- Monitoring and research on watershed issues.
- Community/public education, awareness and involvement.
- Policy advice on local and international issues.

2. What do you think will be the role of your WPAC after the State of the Watershed and the IWMP have been produced?

3. What will be the role of your WPAC in relation to each stakeholder sector?

- Advisory
- Industry – state of the watershed reporting, update of SOW to document change, project partner, local impact/issue to provide input/advice, requirement to monitor - partnership
- Government of Alberta – Advisory, information broker
- Municipalities – advisory, monitoring
- ENGOS – Project partner
- Communities – Resource, water library, broker interaction between community and government, environmental education, training (resource) with school programs; water scholarships, review proposals and provide impartial advice; community grants

4. What are the opportunities for WPACs working together in the future?

7. Important Dates

- i. Trip to Babb, Montana – September 30, 2010
- ii. WPAC Summit – October 20-22, 2010
- iii. Working Well Workshop – November 10, 2010

8. Team Updates

- a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team
 - i. Agrium Caring for Our Watershed Contest
 - ii. Xeriscape with Village of Coutts
 - iii. Annual Canoe Trip
 - iv. Geocache Site
- b. Research, Monitoring and Project Team
 - i. Streambank Restoration Project Update
 - ii. Water Quality Monitoring Program Update
 - iii. Instream Flow Needs Study
 1. Under-ice Data Collection
 - iv. MiRTAP: Milk River Transboundary Aquifer Project – Update

- c. Water Supply and Management Team
 - i. Joint Initiative Team
 - 1. Principle agreement made with Montana – subcommittee struck in July to make principles work
 - 2. Possible formation of an International Joint Watershed Council
 - 3. Credit system and the Letter of Intent – not turn the irrigators into a district, but better determine how waters in “short” years will be shared
 - 4. Identify way to differentiate between a dry circumstance and a very dry circumstance using credits. – Advanced credit system for very dry years.
 - 5. Recommendations will need to be reviewed by MRWCC.
 - 6. A more reliable water supply in place than what we have now.
 - 7. Better forecasting available for supply, better planning.
 - d. Integrated Watershed Management Plan Team
- 9. Financial Report
 - a. AENV Contract was received and signed
 - b. Fundraising efforts – TOK 1M0 Coffee, grants
- 10. Next meeting date – October 28, 2010, Lethbridge, 1:30 pm



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

October 28, 2010 – 1:30 PM

Lethbridge, AENV Office, 2nd Floor

Present: Ross Ford, Ed Sloboda, Ken Miller, Marc Dubord, Terrence Lazarus, Lorraine Nicol, John Ross, Ken Brown, John Byrne, Sandi Riemersma

Minutes

1. Welcome

2. **Invited Guests: Stephanie Clark, CEMS Implementation & Farrah McFadden, Policy Analyst (AENV) – Cumulative Effects Management Systems (CEMS) - Proposed Amendments to the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act (EPEA)***

Stephanie Clark presented on the CEMS Implementation and the Proposed Amendments to the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act.

3. Minutes from last meeting (September 23, 2010)

Motion: Lorraine Nicol moves to adopt the Minutes are submitted. Ross Ford seconds, carried.

4. Trip to Babb, Montana, September 30, 2010

The Trip to Babb was well attended and everyone enjoyed the day. Representatives from Montana were very welcoming and put a lot of energy into providing good information on the headworks system. The group toured the canal system and was able to drive on the banks downstream of the siphon to see the slumps. It was interesting to see the works without water. People expressed an interest in returning to the headworks when the canals are flowing.

5. WPAC Summit, October 20-22, 2010

The WPAC Summit was attended by Will Lindeman, Greg Ottway, Terrence Lazarus, Mary Lupwayi and Sandi Riemersma. There were about 65 people in attendance. We enjoyed good conversation with our fellow WPACs and spent a lot of time in discussion on the future role of WPACs with the help of a facilitator. A paper has been produced that summarizes the outcome of the event. The Executive Directors/Managers were tasked with following up on some of the main discussion points.

6. Representation on Alberta Water Council (AWC)

It is the MRWCC's turn to provide an Alternate on the Alberta Water Council.

a. Time commitment

This is a 4 year time commitment – two years are spent acting as an Alternate and gaining insight into the process and two years are spent as the WPAC Representative.

b. Reimbursements

Funding is available for expenses if the Director and/or Alternate are not supported by any other organization (and an honorarium may be available).

c. Role and Duties of the Representative

The Alberta Water Council meets 3 or 4 times per year, and venues are either in Calgary or Edmonton. The WPAC representative Director or Alternate are expected to review all the briefing material that comes out 2 weeks before each meeting, and be able to provide input back on the material presented. WPACs have one vote on Council decisions (either the Director or the alternate if the Director can not attend).

The Director is expected to provide a review of what took place at the Council meeting back to the WPACs (through the Exec Directors group), and to provide input on WPAC concerns/issues.

All new Directors are expected to attend a briefing at the AWC office where they will be given lots of background material and will be taken through the working process of the Council.

The Water Council may create other workgroups or project committees on particular topics, and Council Directors are expected to participate if their sector is significantly impacted (they can call on help for this from the WPACs).

The next meeting is Oct 28th in Calgary. Council meeting dates for 2011 will be decided at that meeting (this year it was March, June and October).

The Council does cover lots of topics that are very important for WPACs, and it is vital that the WPAC voice is heard at the table. Discussions are generally friendly enough, but there are topics that are controversial and reaching a consensus decision can be difficult at times.

Motion: Ed Sloboda nominates Ken Brown for the alternate position on the Alberta Water Council, Marc Dubord seconds, carried.

7. Alberta Environment's role on MRWCC

There have been some discussions among various WPACs and the provincial government regarding roles on the Board of Directors. The general feeling from the MRWCC is that conflicts of interest may occur but there is ability for abstaining from certain decisions. There have been no issues of concern regarding Alberta Environment's role on the Board.

8. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team

i. MRWCC Painting, Commissioned by Ken Miller

The painting that Ken commissioned in Italy was received last week. Liz Saunders has been asked to digitize the painting and design a poster for the MRWCC.

ii. Agrium Caring for Our Watershed Contest

One of the student projects involves rainbarrels. Marc suggested using food additive drums. A possible supplier is Great Western Containers – apple green containers) (Fixtures, diverter system – talk to Marc)

b. Research, Monitoring and Project Team

i. Streambank Restoration Project Update

Funding for this project is still being sought.

ii. Water Quality Monitoring Program Update

The mainstem sites will likely not be monitored in 2011, but rather more emphasis will be placed on the tributaries. It was felt that five years of solid data will allow for comparison if or when water management changes are made to the system.

iii. Instream Flow Needs Study

1. Under-ice Data Collection

- a. A kick-off meeting was held with AMEC and AENV on October 14, 2010. The three sites previously monitored by Golder were visited. Instrumentation of the sites will occur at the end of November.

2. Winter Model Completion

- a. A contract has been developed and will be signed with AMEC to complete the winter model.

3. Habitat Suitability Criteria Workshop

- a. This workshop will be hosted on December 2 and 3 with experts from Montana and Alberta. Fisheries and Oceans Canada will lead the session with support from the MRWCC.

iv. MiRTAP: Milk River Transboundary Aquifer Project

- 1. No new information is available here. Ed Sloboda brought data from the Water Co-op and will share this information with Sandi.

c. Water Supply and Management Team

JIT Team: Basic agreement has been made, two meetings left (November and January). Afterwards, the recommendations will be developed and presented to the Minister. How to accurately predict the years of very low flow, the assessment periods may be different (snow pack available) and the remainder of the year where snowmelt is not influencing flows (dry years). How to avoid impacts to water users. Expect to finish in January 2011.

d. Integrated Watershed Management Plan Team

i. Approved Water Management Plan Update

Sandi, Ken Miller and Will Lindeman met with Minister Renner, Doug Ohrn, Dave Magee and Kathleen Murphy on October 15, 2010 to discuss the draft Approved Water Management Plan. The Minister wanted to know whether the Council was prepared to move forward with water allocation transfers. It was felt that the recommendations from the JIT should be incorporated into the Approved WMP before bringing the draft to the public for discussion. There were no real implications in delaying the approval of the AWMP, with only three possible transfers pending. One is the transfer between the Town of Milk River and Village of Coutts – Minister Renner felt this could be moved forward under the Regional Water Supply Program. Another was a landowner who wished to apply a portion of his license to another piece of land under his ownership – his land had been expropriated for the highway twinning project and some irrigable land had been lost. The Minister felt that allowing this transfer would not set precedence due to unusual circumstances of the expropriation and the small volume of water transferred (~ 30 acres). The third was a transfer between two parties.

9. Financial Report

The MRWCC received 5,000.00 from Agrium to support the Caring for Our Watersheds project implementation.

10. Important Dates

- i. Working Well Workshop – Heritage Hall, November 10, 2010

11. Next meeting date – November 25, 2010, Milk River, 1:30 pm



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

December 7, 2010 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: Tom Gilchrist, Ed Sloboda, William Lindeman, Marc Dubord, Terrence Lazarus, Ken Brown, John Byrne, Sandi Riemersma, Mary Lupwayi

Guest – Kelly Sparks (Alberta Health Services)

Minutes

1. **Welcome**
2. **Minutes from last meeting (October 28, 2010)**

Motion: Ken Brown moved to adopt the Minutes as submitted. Will Lindeman seconds, carried.

3. **Invited Guest: Marc Dubord Presentation on behalf of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers: Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Sector Plan for the Upstream Oil and Gas Sector**

Marc Dubord presented on the rationale and goals for CEP Plan; water use in the upstream Oil & Gas sector; history of CEP; forecast of water demands; CEP performance measure; and the sector opportunities for CEP

➤ Jan 8th, 2011 is the deadline to submit comments.

4. **Joint Initiative Team (JIT) draft recommendation implications for the Integrated Watershed Management Plan – Water Management Plan: Making Best Use of Available Water Background and Discussion**

The aim of the Joint Team was to put information together to explain what the credit plan will look like on the Milk River.

The plan is not easy to understand. Credit given to Alberta for high periods can be drawn during dry years. The credits are carried season to season. No credit is given in dry years. Credit caps 869 acres. Issues might arise if an irrigator poses questions such as: Is it licensable water? Does it give you senior licenses? How do you stipulate high demand crops vs. low demand crops? The system does not change the international agreement system.

The system can be temporary transfer i.e. one can transfer volume to someone. No more licenses are available. One can only buy water rights. Environmental Assessments have been done and there is fear that there will not be enough time and technical resources available. The aim of the discussion is to manage the extra water and how it should be done. It should be done as a cooperative effort between Environment and Agriculture. January meeting will entail how things will go and how long the credit agreements will be.

Questions from the MRWCC to be submitted to the Joint Team.

4. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team

i. MRWCC Poster

Painting commissioned by Ken Miller. Digitized – There were comments on the head dress on the print. Tom Gilchrist has contacted Anabel Crop Eared Wolf who will refer the matter to the Mukakan Foundation. Waiting for response

ii. School Poster Contest

- The CAIT Team met and developed a theme “How would you solve erosion problem on Milk River”
- It was decided to make the theme more fun for the students: more like FBI Investigating a crime scene on the Milk River, who is the victim, how do you solve the crime (erosion) – what are the causes (clues?) The students would illustrate on the poster how they would solve the erosion problem
- Posters to be collected by end of January, 2011
- Post Posters in Town Hall in February
- Winners to be notified mid-March
- ATB to be contacted for \$300 sponsorship to purchase presents for the winners
- Have students accept prize at AGM

iii. Agrium Caring for Our Watershed Contest

- 6 out of 10 winners were from the local Erle Middle School. The winners received money for themselves and their school.
- MRWCC received 5,000.00 from Agrium to implement projects.
- Met with the students, parents, and teacher to discuss their involvement in the project implementation process
- Meetings went well
- Issues with how to implement Jace Doenz and Trey Blackmer’s projects. Question on where the system should be placed without causing conflicts need to be addressed
- Implementation Community Meeting to take place Thursday 24th, February 2011 at 7pm at Heritage Hall
- Students to make 15 min. presentations on their projects followed by implementation material presentation

iv. Working Well Workshop Report

- Workshop went well
- Good feedback from participants
- 12 wells were registered
- 16 Participants and 4 presenters total of 20 participants
- Look into getting manual binders for the group

v. Annual General Meeting

- Proposed date and venue – April 7th, 2011 at the Civic Center
- Ideas on theme and speaker were discussed:
 - Montana Speaker – Missouri watershed, stonecat
 - Larry Myers – St. Mary Rehabilitation – Speaker
 - Geology – Alfonso – transboundary map update – aquifer
 - John Dormaar – book signing
- Idea of inviting the Minister of Environment or another high powered representative was discussed

Motion: Marc Dubord moves to have the AGM on April 7th, 2011. Terrence Lazarus seconds, carried.

a. Geocache sites – update and assign second location

The plan was to have 4 geocache sites. So far, there is only one site. There is need for another site. Ed suggested a site 6 miles west of Milk River Town on old Morton land. There is need for a slightly bigger tight sealed container since the current one is too full
This is to be tabled until next spring

b. Website – tools and needs

- Working with a Web designer to add a photo viewer and Pay-Pal account for the Cuppers coffee purchases on the MRWCC website.

c. Xeriscape updates

- Need to follow-up with workshop participants to see if they have implemented the ideas and if there is enough interest for next year
- Coutts is planning a workshop in next spring – CAO may need help

d. Action Plan for 2011

Workshops and Tours

- Invite Montana Head Waters group to tour Milk River Canada next year?
- Canyon hiking for members in May? Anybody who wants to come (Spencer – 500 to 600 ft) 2 hour drive to site. North side
- 2012 Tour the Headwaters – view Siphon when running

e. 2011 Annual Canoe Tour - June

May 2011 Milk River Canyon Tour –Pinhorn Ranch – follow river to crossing, Ford cinder Sweetgrass Hills – Montana access
Gold Butte (middle) – Old Boothill Cemetery, Town of 10,000 people

5. Research, Monitoring and Project Team

1. Instream Flow Needs Study
2. Under-ice Data Collection
 1. Went out with AMEC to view the 3 sites. Observe ice thickness
3. Winter Model Completion
 1. AMEC will complete the model using Golder's data
4. Habitat Suitability Criteria Workshop
 1. Held last week. Went well. Were surprised that they had a lot of data. Managed to go through all the fish the last one will need to be completed on line.
 2. Sandi is compiling data for distribution
 3. Budgeted for \$15000 but will probably use approximately \$3000

6. Water Supply and Management Team

1. Integrated Watershed Management Plan Team
2. Report of the Water Conservation Survey Results for the Town of Milk River and Village of Coutts will be presented on a later date due to time constraints

7. Financial Report

The budgeted looks good. There are no over expenditures. Sandi to present the financial statement at next meeting.

8. Important Dates

December 9, 2010 – Invasive Plant Workshop

Action: Mary to circulate agenda to the board

9. Next Meeting Date

January 27, 2010, Lethbridge, 1:30 pm

Motion: Ed Sloboda moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:40pm. Marc Dubord seconds, carried.